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Atty. Dkt. No. P66566US0

#7/a  
AB  
03/06/02

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the application of: NITSCH, et al.

Appl. No.: National Stage of /EP99/08744, filed 12 November 1999

Filed: HEREWITH

For: METHODS OF DIAGNOSING OR TREATING NEUROLOGICAL DISEASES AND CELL DEGENERATION

**PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**

Assistant Commissioner of Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Please enter the instant before initial examination.

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Cancel claims 1-38, without prejudice or disclaimer, and substitute the following new claims.

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39. An isolated nucleic acid encoding a protein molecule shown in SEQ ID NO: 1.
40. An isolated nucleic acid molecule encoding a protein molecule, the function of which is to protect cells against degeneration and/or cell death, wherein the amino acid sequence of the protein molecule comprises the sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:1 or a functional variant thereof.
41. An isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 39, wherein the nucleic acid molecule is a DNA molecule.
42. An isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 41, wherein the nucleic acid molecule is a cDNA molecule, in particular a cDNA molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence shown in SEQ ID NO: 2.